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# Maine EnviroNews, Summer 2014

Maine Department of Environmental Protection

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## Maine DEP EnviroNews

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## Maine EnviroNews



**Summer 2014**

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### Commissioner's Corner

Earlier this month, the EPA released a plan to reduce carbon emissions from existing fossil fueled power plants. It's generated a lot of discussion nationally and within the State about climate change. It's a discussion that I welcome. Climate change by its very nature crosses into



every single environmental discipline we have. Air, water, energy, waste, land use, all of our actions and reactions matter when it comes to climate change.

DEP is engaged in both climate mitigation and adaption efforts in many ways: whether it is through committing to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, whether it is through our work with regional and national environmental associations, or our international work with New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers, our work with EPA Region I helping EPA to build a cross-state and federal approach. Our work is multi-faceted, multi-pollutant, and we are deeply involved.

It is forcing us as a regulatory agency to really break-down the various silos which have been built up over 40 years. And I say thank goodness! It's why the Governor created the Environmental and Energy Resources Working Group, which is led by DEP and is comprised of DACF, DOT, Energy, IFW and DMR. We were asked to further compile information on the ongoing work all of our agencies are undertaking and publish that later this summer.

You have an opportunity to submit your suggestions, recommendations and ideas how we as agencies can reduce any impediments we have created, unblock road blocks we may have built and explain how we can undertake a cross-agency approach to climate change adaptation work you need to accomplish. Submit these ideas to [Erle Townsend](#) by June 30.

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## 2014 Environmental Excellence Award Winners

The 2014 Environmental Excellence awards, administered by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, were presented by Governor LePage and Commissioner Aho in a ceremony at Vic Firth Company, the world's leading drumstick manufacturer based in Newport, Maine.



[Texas Instruments](#), [Allagash Brewery](#), the [Lewiston-Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority](#) and the [Maine Water Environment Association](#) received awards for voluntarily going above and beyond regulatory requirements for innovation and environmental sustainability.

"This year's recipients show that both large investments and small changes pay off both economically and environmentally. The department is proud of the recipients who understand that a healthy environment and strong economy support one another and by stewarding our natural resources ensures a strong and stable economy. Today's recipients know that when they both prosper, we all win."

Learn more about the [2014 award winners](#).

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## Reducing Municipal Stormwater Pollution

Every time it rains, or when snow and ice melt, stormwater is flowing across Maine's landscape. In a natural setting of forest, meadows, and fields, stormwater flow is slowed by plants and naturally existing irregular surfaces such as mounds and depressions in the landscape. Slowing the flow limits erosion and provides time for some of it to filter through the ground which recharges our ground and surface water systems, like streams and wetlands.

Parking lots, roads and driveways prevent stormwater from soaking into the ground and cause it to run off faster. Fast water is hungry water, meaning the quicker it is moving the more material it can erode and carry. Stormwater picks up pollution as it flows across paved surfaces and carries it to the nearest wetland or waterbody. The pollution could include soil, spilled chemicals, pet waste, or many other substances.

The Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) and other laws regulate municipal stormwater management. These laws protect and improve water quality in Maine's wetlands, streams, rivers, and lakes so we can enjoy fresh safe drinking water, healthy ecosystems, and many types of water recreation.

Towns maintain stormwater systems such as roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, human-made channels or storm drains to reduce or eliminate pollution entering Maine's surface waters. This summer 30 municipalities will work on some new requirements of the MS4 General Permit issued July 1, 2013.

To learn more find out and how you can help, visit DEP's [MS4 website](#) or contact [David Ladd](#) (207-215-7168).

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## Proper Disposal of Household Hazardous Waste

Although some household wastes are hazardous (i.e., they may be toxic, flammable, corrosive, or reactive), they are not required to be disposed of as hazardous waste. Common products used by households that are hazardous include: pesticides, including weed and feed, moss killers, insect sprays and slug bait; thinners and solvents; oven, drain & toilet bowl cleaners; bleach and ammonia (mixing these creates a toxic gas); fluorescent light bulbs; gasoline and antifreeze; oil-based paint; and a number of electronic devices. When these products are thrown in the trash, they can release toxics to Maine's environment.

The best approach to preventing pollution caused by household hazardous waste (HHW) is to not create it in the first place. This means using [safer alternatives](#) (e.g., baking soda and vinegar for cleaning, using LED light bulbs), buying only as much as you need (paint), and safely using up what you do buy. Maine currently has product stewardship programs for fluorescent light bulbs and electronics. You can find a collection location near you on our [Help ME Recycle webpage](#). A stewardship program for paint is scheduled to begin in 2015.

There are some safe management options for the HHW that remains after reducing, reusing and recycling it. Some towns offer a HHW collection event for their residents, once or twice a year, to ensure safe disposal of HHW. These collection events are usually organized regionally, with towns working together to hire a hazardous waste contractor to run the event and provide safe handling of the hazardous products. In addition, there are two permanent HHW collection sites in [Portland](#) and [Lewiston](#); anyone can bring their HHW to either of these facilities, where a fee may be charged.

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## **\$1.7 million in Resource Conservation Funds Available**

The Nature Conservancy is seeking initial proposals for a new round of competitive grants from the Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program, which the organization administers on behalf of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The program helps offset impacts to natural resources by funding the restoration, enhancement or preservation of similar habitats. It provides regulatory flexibility for agencies to allow a fee payment in lieu of traditional mitigation options.

Grants are awarded annually, and over the first five funding rounds, MNRCP has distributed close to ten million dollars to important efforts to conserve Maine's natural resources.

How to apply: Public agencies, non-profit conservation organizations and private individuals are encouraged to submit a letter of intent, including a project summary form and map, for eligible restoration and preservation projects in Maine. All letters of intent must be submitted online by 5:00 pm, June 30, 2014 at <http://mnrcp.org/>. Applicants whose projects meet the program's requirements will be invited to submit full proposals. All proposals will be evaluated and ranked by a Review Committee convened by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and made up of public and nonprofit entities. The Nature Conservancy administers the process but does not decide which proposals receive funding. Final grant awards are expected to be made in early 2015.

For more information about the Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program, or to apply for funding, visit the program's new website at <http://mnrcp.org/>

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## **Small Business Week**

Commissioner Aho celebrated Small Business Week by visiting Maine Standard Biofuels and presenting a signed certificate from Governor Paul R. LePage.

Small Business Week was May 12-16, and the LePage Administration Commissioners visited numerous small businesses across the State to thank them for keeping Maine's economy strong.



Since 2006 Maine Standard Biofuels has collected used cooking oil from restaurants and turned it into biodiesel for large truck fleets. With a mission to be a leader in sustainability efforts in the State of Maine, the Portland-based company supports the local economy through socially and environmentally sustainable practices. Learn more about [Maine Standard Biofuels](#) at their website.

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## DEP Invasive Species Program asks, “Are you a preventer or a spreader?”

Maine’s springtime powers are underway as trees leaf out, flowers bloom and lawns relentlessly demand to be mowed. In lakes, underwater, the same holds true as aquatic plants including unwelcomed invasive species respond to longer daylight and warmer temperatures.

Recreational and commercial users of public waters are also emerging for the season, taking to our lakes and ponds with boats, fishing gear and hydro-seeding/irrigation equipment—all which increase opportunities for habitat-choking plants to hitchhike beyond their host lake.

Freeloading destructive plants vs. people: which has the upper hand?

Certainly boaters do if they inspect gear and discard into trash all plant debris prior to entering and just after leaving any Maine water body. That gear includes motor prop, anchor and lines, bunks or rollers, trailer hitches, axles and license plates. Same goes for fishing gear—inspect tackle as well as check and dry live wells before traveling overland.

Landscapers who hydro-seed and irrigate and water tank drivers who service swimming pools need to do their part too. Sanitation practices include anti-siphon devices or screened nozzles on hoses, never returning water to a lake or pond, and checking for and removing plant debris on equipment right after taking water and before filling. Better yet, avoid taking water altogether from [infested lakes](#).

For more information, contact [John McPhedran](#) at 215-9863.

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## Healthy Beaches

Now that the summer heat is officially here, Maine’s coastal beaches are a great place for visitors and residents alike to take a dip to cool off. Beach goers can be assured that when they head to a beach it will be clean and almost always for swimming thanks to the Maine Healthy Beaches monitoring program, administered by DEP with staff assistance from UMaine



Cooperative Extension.

In 2013, MHB processed over 2156 samples at 148 monitoring locations from the beaches in York County to Bar Harbor and 95 percent of the days were free of beach advisories or closures. Nearly 85 percent of exceedances were preceded by rainfall.

DEP urges all to use best beach practices which include picking up pet waste, using diapers for small children, not feeding water fowl and maintain and routinely pump out septic systems.

For more information go to [www.mainehealthybeaches.org](http://www.mainehealthybeaches.org) or contact [Colin Clark](#).

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## **Rulemaking and Opportunities for Public Comment**

The DEP maintains resources to engage Maine people in Department rulemaking and other opportunities for participation. Proposed rules available for comment and rulemaking meeting schedules, as well as proposed, recently enacted and pending regulations are available on the [DEP Proposed Rulemaking webpage](#).

You can now sign up to receive rulemaking updates clicking the managing your subscription at the bottom of this e-mail.

### **Upcoming Rulemaking (Dates and rules subject to change)**

June 17, 2014

**Chapter 409 SWM Processing (odor)** (Adoption)

**Chapter 410 SWM Composting (odor)** (Adoption)

Chapters 409 and 410: As required by Resolves 2013 Chapter 43 ("Resolve, Directing the Department of Environmental Protection To Develop Quantitative Odor Management Standards") the Department of Environmental Protection is posting draft changes to the Solid Waste Management Rules: Processing Facilities, 06-096 CMR 409 and Composting Facilities, 06-096 CMR 410. The revisions incorporate quantitative odor management standards for facilities that process wastewater treatment sludge from publicly owned treatment works and facilities that process septage.

### **Public Comment**

Other opportunities for participation include public comment periods for Department agreements, planning and federal rulemaking opportunities at the [DEP Opportunity for Comment](#) webpage.

Sign up to receive notifications about hearings or public comment periods, or contact [Mike Karagiannes](#) (207) 287-7024.

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## Training

As part of our commitment to supporting and engaging our partners in environmental protection, DEP and our partners host many educational opportunities across Maine. Below is a list of upcoming DEP classes. On the [DEP training webpage](#), find links to additional training opportunities hosted by our partners in environmental protection.

June 25 [Legal Professional Education Series - Enforcement Update](#), simulcast from Augusta to Portland and Bangor

July 19 [Annual Lake Monitoring Conference](#), Turner

August 13-14 [Septic Systems: From Design to Approval](#), Richmond  
Contact Maine Rural Water Association, 207-737-4092

September 12 [Watershed Survey Workshop](#), Auburn

[Maine DOT Local Roads Program workshops](#)



### Maine Department of Environmental Protection

Questions?  
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